



**BULMER FOUNDATION**

Planning for tomorrow, acting today

## **Five Fruit-trees make an Orchard**

**Evaluation report for the Orchard Art theatre tour in 2014**

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## Summary

***“It should remind everyone, however much you think you know, that individuals have the most amazing potential, given the opportunity.”***

This evaluation considers the impact of two performances of a play called *Five Fruit-trees make an Orchard*, developed by the About Face Theatre Company, part of Herefordshire charity ECHO, and performed by nine actors with learning disabilities. The audiences comprised 212 people, including the Lord-Lieutenants of Herefordshire and Oxfordshire, academics, leading figures in orcharding and cider-making, commissioners, practitioners, and family of the actors. Children at all three special schools in Herefordshire helped to create a specially commissioned hymn that was sung by everyone at both performances.

The impact of the performances has been assessed through questionnaires sent to all those who attended, discussion with the actors, and other feedback. The play had a superb response, being universally received positively. The audiences reported that not only had they been touched emotionally but that they had learned much about orchards and through experiencing the abilities of people with learning disabilities. The play gave the parents and families of the actors a chance to share their loved ones' success and an opportunity to see their work valued by society.

The evaluation was undertaken by the Bulmer Foundation, a Herefordshire-based sustainable development charity, with funding from HEINEKEN UK. The Bulmer Foundation gratefully acknowledges the help of ECHO, which has been part of the Orchard Art project from the beginning; poet and composer Helena Cavan; mediashypp who provide filming; those who gave technical support for the performances; and the venues at Magdalen College Chapel, the University of Oxford Botanic Garden, and Lyde Court in Herefordshire. But special thanks go to the actors, Evie Thomas; Jack Butler; Jade Millward; Laura Walne; Matthew Jones; Nick Haines; Sam Evans; Tim Dowse; and Tom Fleming, and the About Face Theatre Company artistic director, Jess MacKenzie. The Orchard Art theatre tour was funded by the E. F. Bulmer Benevolent Fund; Herefordshire Council; the Bulmer Foundation; the Becket Bulmer Trust; the Richard Bulmer Trust; and HEINEKEN UK.

## Introduction

Since 2011, the Bulmer Foundation has been running a project called Orchard Art which enables people with learning disabilities to spend time in orchards working with a wide range of professional artists, and then to showcase their work to the wider public.

The project has two identified benefits:

Firstly, there is the experience in the orchard for people with learning disabilities who receive a rare opportunity to be outside in the rich, safe environment provided by an orchard and to interact with different professional artists. 82 people with learning disabilities took part in 2011 and 100 in 2012; and of all ages – the youngest aged 4, the oldest in their nineties.

Secondly, by working with others, the Bulmer Foundation has been able to provide places for people with learning disabilities to demonstrate their skills to the wider community, enabling everyone to share enriched experiences together. Exhibitions at the Cider Museum in Hereford have been well received with the exhibitions opened by Jesse Norman MP in 2011 and Lady Darnley, Herefordshire's Lord-Lieutenant, in 2012. HM the Queen admired an Orchard Art blossom sculpture during her visit to Hereford in 2012 and met participants.

In May 2013, an Orchard Celebration in Hereford Cathedral showcased the talents and sensitivity of people with learning disabilities. The Cathedral was filled by a congregation of friends and families, trustees, members of the Bulmer and Heineken families, senior management of the Heineken business, local partners and orchard owners and enthusiasts. The feedback after the Cathedral celebration, and reaction to the film of this event, showed that the project resonates with people right across our community and is really important to an understanding and acceptance of learning disabilities: "...it makes you happy to be alive..."(Michel de Carvalho) "...restores my faith in human nature..."(Cllr Liz Chave) "...an amazing project..." (Stefan Orlowski, President of Heineken in the Americas). It was even congratulated in Parliament by the Secretary of State for DEFRA.



Central to the Cathedral celebration was a short play performed by a group of students with learning disabilities who attended the Contact Course at Hereford College of Arts. Through mime, the actors brought to life the words of a seventeenth century man from Oxford called Ralph Austen, which was read in the Cathedral by the Chancellor, Canon Chris Pullin. Austen was a religious zealot, an orchard enthusiast, horticulturalist and a cider maker.

The performance was remarkable and moving and the impetus for the Orchard Art theatre tour was to share the talents of this group, and the insight into the value of orchards that their performance enabled, more widely.

## **Aims of the Orchard Art theatre tour**

The aims were two-fold, described as:

1. To enhance the life skills, self esteem and public perception of people with learning disabilities
2. To raise public awareness of the values of orchards

## **The reason for the evaluation**

The Orchard Art theatre tour brought the project onto a new level, both in terms of engaging with the public outside Herefordshire, but also because the development of a new play over a six month period was a significant investment for a project which hitherto had largely engaged artists to work in orchards for just one or two days. It was therefore important to understand the impact of this phase of the project upon the key stakeholders.

## **Description of the Orchard Art theatre tour**

The students who performed in the Cathedral had progressed to a new course run by the About Face Theatre Company, part of Herefordshire charity ECHO and preliminary planning discussions took place with Jess MacKenzie, Artistic Director for About Face.

The initial idea was to simply refresh the mime performed in the cathedral, where the students had used their actions to illustrate the text, but not spoken. Jess's aspirations were far greater. The play developed into a structure to describe the different aspects of orchard value, based upon the findings in Natural England Commissioned Report 090 *Economic, biodiversity, resource protection and social values of orchards: A study of six orchards by the Herefordshire Orchards Community Evaluation Project* (2012). This was done both by exploring the findings with the people with learning disabilities, as well as their own ideas from several visits to orchards, and by the actors learning passages of Austen's 1653 text *A treatise of fruit-trees* relevant to the different values.



About Face worked initially with ten students although due to illness one was unable to complete and the final cast consisted of nine actors with learning disabilities.

Two performances were held in July 2014, one at the University of Oxford Botanic Garden and Magdalen College chapel, Oxford and one at Lyde Court in Hereford. The invited audiences included the Lords Lieutenant in both counties, mayors and councillors, together with orchard and gardening enthusiasts, academics, representatives of organisations working with people with learning disabilities, commissioners, religious leaders, trustees of funding charities and members of the Bulmer family. Some of the leading orchard academics such as Dr Barrie Juniper and historians such as Dr Charles Webster attended at Oxford.

The intention of the theatre tour was to promulgate the benefits of Orchard Art with a much wider audience, whilst giving the people with learning disabilities involved invaluable life experience, and improved self-esteem. In addition, there was seen to be an important message to be made by linking the insight and abilities of people learning disabilities with the august centre of learning that is Oxford University.

As well as the actors, pupils of the three schools for children with learning disabilities worked with poet and composer Helena Cavan in workshops held in orchards in Herefordshire to create new words to a hymn, expressing the value of orchards in song. During the workshops, Helena listened to and recorded the children's own words, threading them together in the song. The song was sung in Magdalen College chapel and at Lyde Court.

At Lyde Court, the Orchard Art logo was launched, which had been designed based upon ideas submitted by people with learning disabilities. The launch was led by two people with learning disabilities wearing t-shirts bearing the design.

Further, at Lyde Court, other people with learning disabilities were invited to explain something that they were proud about. Five achievements were showcased, all including people with learning disabilities.

Young people with housing issues working with mediashypp were involved in filming at Lyde Court and in creating an orchard scene backdrop, filmed throughout a year.

The events were also an opportunity to speak about the work and thinking of Ralph Austen on the value of orchards and of Fred Bulmer, and to draw parallels between them and their influence despite coming from different eras and having very different world views. For example, both wanted to improve the lives of the population - Austen advocated the planting of fruit trees to give employment and food to the poor, echoed in Fred's interests in housing conditions and fresh air. Both were cider makers and realised the importance of orchards.

### Objectives

- Ten people with learning disabilities will create and perform a play about orchard value in at least two venues in July 2014
- 50 people with learning disabilities will be involved with creating scenery for the play and be offered the chance to watch a performance
- A performance will be held in Herefordshire to which health commissioners and practitioners will be invited
- A performance will be held at Oxford University to which academics, politicians and leading figures will be invited
- 250 people watch the performances and report positive experience
- A record of the theatrical performance is created that can be shown elsewhere

## Stakeholders

The groups involved in the Orchard Art theatre tour are:

The student actors

Their parents, carers and other family members

Staff at Echo's About Face theatre company

Staff at the Bulmer Foundation

Audiences in Oxford and Hereford

Schools for children with learning disabilities involved in creating the hymn performed at both venues

People with learning disabilities involved in the Orchard Art logo competition



## **Evaluation approach**

The main method used to assess impact was structured questionnaires with audiences, and a focus group with the actors. The questionnaires were tailored to the audiences, with three different questionnaires issued – for Oxford, Lyde Court and parents/families. The core questions were the same, but having different questionnaires allowed further exploration of some aspects where most of the audience was more deeply involved with people with learning disabilities. In addition, a focus group was held with the actors with learning disabilities three months after the performances, to assess the impact upon them.

## **Cost of the Orchard Art theatre tour**

The cost of the theatre tour was £21,788. This comprises:

	£
Theatrical company staff time, staging and tour costs (ECHO)	8,664
Music (including writing of orchard hymn)	1,202
Venue costs (food and drink, donations)	2,522
Filming (mediashypp)	1,250
Management and event organisation	8,150
	<hr/>
	21,788



## Objectives

The project delivered the intended objectives.

- **Ten people with learning disabilities will create and perform a play about orchard value in at least two venues in July 2014**

Nine student actors performed in the play (one further actor had to stand down due to ill health) and were actively involved in devising and writing the content. The play was performed in Oxford and Hereford with a dress rehearsal to family in Leominster.



- **50 people with learning disabilities will be involved with creating scenery for the play and be offered the chance to watch a performance**

35 school children were involved in developing the hymn sung at both events, none attended the performance in Hereford, although invited.

50 people with learning disabilities took part in the logo competition launched at the Hereford event by two people with learning disabilities.

Groups of people with learning disabilities from Oxfordshire joined the audience in Oxford.

- **A performance will be held in Herefordshire to which health commissioners and practitioners will be invited**

This took place at Lyde Court, Hereford and was well attended by health professionals and commissioners, led by the Director of Adult Wellbeing.

- **A performance will be held at Oxford University to which academics, politicians and leading figures will be invited**

The event took place at Magdalen College Chapel and the University of Oxford Botanic Gardens and was attended by local politicians, academics, the Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire, three deputy Lieutenants and the Deputy Lord Mayor of Oxford.

- **250 people watch the performances and report positive experience**

212 people watched the performances at Oxford and Hereford. A subsequent performance of one act of the play was performed at the Courtyard Theatre, Hereford to an audience of 150 people at the launch event for the City of Culture bid.



- **A record of the theatrical performance is created that can be shown elsewhere**

Film records were made of the events at Oxford and Hereford. A film of the play has since been commissioned from mediashypp to allow wider circulation of the work. This has been encouraged by the feedback from those in the audiences at the performances.

## Outputs

The project has delivered against the intended outputs that had been identified.

- **A play about that value of orchards**

The play *Five Fruit-trees make an Orchard* was written by About Face theatre company to combine the students own experiences of being in orchards with text from Ralph Austen's *Treatise of fruit-trees*. The play had been created in line with a project brief that incorporated the four aspects of value – environmental, economic, social, and spiritual –as well as the stories and writings of Ralph Austen and Fred Bulmer. Structured in five scenes (the four values and a celebratory dance), the play reinforced the message about five trees. It also allowed the students the opportunity to showcase their ability to remember and deliver complex passages of seventeenth century prose as well as show their own characters and ideas in corresponding scenes that they had designed.



- **Two performances of the play**

Two performances were held in July 2014. The performance in the University of Oxford Botanic Garden had an audience of 89 people and the performance at Lyde Court near Hereford was watched by 123 people

Receiving a paper about the diversity of apples from Dr Barrie Juniper proved the unexpected theme for the performance at Lyde Court – that people are diverse in skills and abilities as much as apples are. This allowed the orchard to be used as a metaphor for an inclusive society.

- **A film or photographic record of the play available on the Bulmer Foundation website**

A video record was made at the Oxford performance and a professional filmmaker recorded the Hereford event.

Subsequently, the play was performed to camera.



- **Additional artwork or music created by people with learning disabilities**

No props were created by people with learning disabilities, but children from the three schools catering for children with learning disabilities in Herefordshire helped to devise a hymn *Shining orchard after rain* through attending workshops in orchards with poet and composer Helena Cavan. The hymn is shown in Appendix 2.



At the Lyde Court event, a logo for the Orchard Art project was launched which had been created by a local artist from entries in a competition. There were 50 entries in the competition, from six groups.



## Evaluation of outcomes

Theory of change describes the path towards what the project is aiming to achieve in terms of outcomes, the measurable changes that occur as a result of the project. In the planning stages for the Orchard Art theatre tour, a series of expected outcomes was established.

The theory of change for the Orchard Art theatre tour was that by bringing members of the public together with people with learning disabilities, and their families, the public perception of learning disability would be enhanced, thus breaking down barriers in society and instilling a sense of community. The life skills and self esteem of people with learning disabilities and their families would be improved by gaining positive experiences within the community, particularly with those to which they are not normally exposed, including people that would be seen by them to be 'important'. People with learning disabilities putting across messages about orchards would encourage the messages to be heard, with the theory being that not only would the messages be made in a straightforward manner, but also that the unexpected delivery method would encourage people to listen. Connectivity and awareness are central to the impact of the Orchard Art project and the theatre tour in particular and the effect upon audiences, participants and their carers was particularly important.

The research context for the theory of change is contained in Appendix 4 and Appendix 5 shows the theory of change for the Orchard Art theatre tour diagrammatically.

The evaluation assessed whether the experience of engagement with wider community influenced the participants, and their families and carers, and whether those in the audience were awakened to the possibilities both for people with learning disabilities and for orchards.

Delivery has been evaluated against the outcomes expected when the theatre tour was being planned. Everyone who attended a performance was asked to complete a questionnaire using surveymonkey and 47 questionnaires were completed (24 from Oxford, 16 from Lyde Court, 7 from parents). The formats of the questionnaires were largely the same but with some questions targeted more at opportunities (at Lyde and with parents) and parents were also asked more about their feelings and the significance of what had been achieved.

A follow up focus group discussion was also held with the actors with learning disabilities, although their parents' responses are probably the clearest indicator of the impact of involvement in the project upon the participants.

- **Wider community see people with learning disabilities more positively and appreciate their abilities and contribution to the wider community**

66% of respondents said that they knew a lot or a fair bit about learning disability before the performance but 47% said that they had learned a lot or a fair bit about learning disabilities as a result of attending the event.

People were unclear about what to expect when they accepted the invitation.

"I didn't really know what to expect. I thought the performance would be low-key, but then it was being held in a location that was quite the opposite. All I was sure of was that it was going to be fun, and thought provoking in some way"

Especially at Oxfordshire, most people didn't have much experience of the organisations involved nor of learning disabilities, so they were simply coming because they had been invited and were enticed because it sounded like "something different and unusual".

70% of the respondents said that the events far exceeded their expectations and all parents said that their family member's performance had far exceeded their expectations.

Parents commented upon the professional approach with which the students approached the performances

"I was pleased to see him approach the Orchard Art performances in a more professional manner. This showed maturity and that he had taken on board the tuition from Jess and Zoe (About Face) and understood the content of the play"

and noted that they coped well with the different surroundings.

"Because she was performing in front of a much larger audience we were anxious that she might be overawed by the occasion but this was not the case."

The Oxford performance was the first time that the actors had performed to an audience from the wider community and outside the County and their parents relished

"the opportunity to see my son, and fellow actors, perform to an audience that was not solely family and friends and to see them enjoy themselves."

There was a sense of pride in the manner in which they had coped

"I'm always amazed how they all, as a group, rise to the challenge of putting on a complex play, supporting each other and interacting with each other in a way that perhaps is difficult for them to do off the stage."



The opportunity to showcase the abilities of the actors to a wider audience was clearly important and appreciated by the parents and others involved with caring for people with learning disabilities.

“Often people have pre conceived ideas of learning disabilities - and this was a wonderful way of showing how delightful, accomplished, talented and 'able' they can be.”



This exposure was also beneficial to the wider audience.

“I have that middle-class confusion / discomfort with people with learning disabilities - I'm not really sure how to respond to them best, or where the patronising line is, or what is and isn't acceptable to laugh at. And so I am guilty of avoiding situations where those things could be tested and so perpetuate my ignorance. This event helped confront and change a lot of that.”

Perhaps more than anything, people's preconceptions were broken down by the professionalism of the approach encouraged by the About Face Theatre Company, which showed

“that people with learning disabilities, with support, can have the same level of professional input into events as more 'able bodied' performers.”

ECHO's Chief Officer observed

“I think the audiences at both performances were astonished at the quality of the work. This was particularly true in Oxford where fewer of the audience had any real experience of people with learning disabilities. I don't think people expected to be so entertained or captivated by the performance.”

The fact that the About Face theatre company strive to emphasise theatre rather than disability was encapsulated in the performances which showed that labelling people with disability may be unhelpful.

“It should remind everyone, however much you think you know, that individuals have the most amazing potential, given the opportunity.”



“If you allow people opportunities without preconceptions the results can be powerful.”

There was particular comment about the sensitivity with which the actors performed which created

“a level of emotional engagement by the actors that translated to the audience”

and pointing out the perhaps unexpected

“understanding of the emotions of the people they played: it was very sensitive”

which showed

“that disability actors can cast as dramatic an atmosphere as ordinary actors”

Integration was a recurrent theme – with the comment that many interventions tend to be insular, that is that they are not held in places where those with learning disabilities can mix with the able bodied, even at break times.

“The main message I took away was the talent of these young people with learning disabilities and confirmation for me of the need to support increasingly inclusive communities which enable them to take a full part and share their skills. “



- **Improved confidence and self-worth of actors**

The discussion with the actors covered what they remembered best and things they particularly liked or disliked. Perhaps strangely, at Oxford the solo performed by Laura and Evie in the Chapel was referred to as a high point, as was celebrating Rev Julie Read's birthday with a cake in the Botanic Garden afterwards. Tom knew that the big Black Pine tree under which we had danced had since fallen down and Tim remembered that it was Ralph Austen's words they had recited. They had learned about orchards – saying that they are important for producing apples, cider, pears and perry as well as producing oxygen to help the environment. Tom referred to their "autumn show". Sam didn't like the screaming of some of the people with learning disabilities who had been brought to Oxford to watch the performance.

The actors had clearly taken their performances seriously and perhaps as a result they hadn't engaged with the audience. Evie, for example, said that she only looked at the audience once whilst reading the letter that made many in the audience cry. She didn't know about that – though Tom had noticed it.

It was their parents who they judged to be the most important people in the audience.

ECHO considers that all the actors grew in confidence through taking part in the theatrical performances.

"Although they had all been involved in drama before, none had had the opportunity to perform in such prestigious venues to so many "important" people. They had to learn some pretty complicated prose in a fairly short time scale and rose to the challenge wonderfully. Having such a positive response to the end result has, of course, really helped their feelings of self worth and esteem."

Some of the views of the actors and other members of the cast about orchards, as set out in the performance programmes, are shown in Appendix 3.



The parents are probably the best placed to describe the real impact of the Orchard Art theatre tour upon their family member, described here as being able to show their capability and thereby enhancing their self esteem.

“Orchard Art has provided my son with outstanding opportunities - some not necessarily open to able bodied people. You always know that your child has potential but if they have a learning disability it is so much harder for them to realise their capability. The play has given us visible proof of his ability and we will continue to look for, and support, opportunities for him outside the usual, and often sedentary, choices available to him.... The events have enriched his life and allowed him to explore how to respond to new situations and people confidently. A vital lesson for anyone.”

“To watch them achieve and being recognised for their achievements always supports your aspirations for them. It cannot be overestimated how important self-esteem is for anybody, but especially for our guys, who have all the hopes and desires that everybody else has, but face additional difficulties in achieving them. This is very much true for (my son), and it has been great to see him gain self-confidence and bond with his peer group. He has always had a passion for acting and loves everything to do with it, front on and backstage! It would be lovely to think they could continue to put on productions of some sort...”

“It proves once again that they are capable of rising to any challenge and it gave them the satisfaction of being appreciated on the big stage! And it was exciting for them!”

The actors’ participation was clearly emotionally significant for their parents. When asked how they felt at the end of the event, the words that the parents used were “over the moon”, “uplifted”, “exhilarated”, “positive”, “proud”, “emotional”. One family member commented about how they were pleased to find out about the plans for the tour, saying “This would be her only chance to go to Oxford” an expression that encapsulated pride, some incredulity, and also the learned helplessness that comes from the constant worry of needing to battle to support a loved one who needs your care. Particularly telling was that for one father the most special moment was “the applause” which showed to him that the students’ achievements had been recognised by the wider community. Although not expressed, the actors themselves are likely to have had similar feelings or at least been made to feel proud of their achievement though the reinforcement from their parents following the events.

- **Audiences understand the importance of simplicity**

The respondents clearly engaged with the immediacy of the performance on an emotional level.

“It seemed simple, honest and was very moving”

The use of actors with learning disabilities appeared to encourage people to tap into the actors’ own concentration

“We have a lot to learn from them.”



Although the play in fact became more complex than had originally been planned, the messages about orchards and orchard value and some of the key historical players were clearly expressed.

Those that knew the reference document for the play, Natural England’s Commissioned Report NECR090, recognised the power of putting across the learnings from that report in a different way. A Natural England Adviser at the Oxford performance commented afterwards

“The play provided evidence of a tangible link between wellbeing and habitat, that we often seem to forget about, and could be so valuable in terms of giving abandoned habitats such as traditional orchards their value in the human psyche. In simple terms people of all ages seem to enjoy being in orchards. Levelled by the play, everyone had equal value and a sense of place - regardless of scientific worthiness - even in such lofty surroundings.”

“I learned that scientific reports mean nothing if they are left on the shelf. The play brought it to life in a way I had never envisaged.”

It was therefore the mixture of a well structured play, which delivered clear messages, with professional delivery and complicated text which the actors had clearly laboured to learn, that engaged the audiences on several levels.

“I cannot convey just how inspirational and heart moving Orchard Art was... the actors were absolutely amazing – I was astonished how well they

delivered and conveyed each act and the sense of meaning that orchards have.”

- **The multiple value of orchards are appreciated**

Although 62% of respondents said that they already knew a lot or a fair bit about orchard value before the event, 55% reported that they had learned a lot or a fair bit from the event. At Oxford, there were more people in the audience who had a deep knowledge of orchards (79%), including academics and horticulturalists, so fewer people (46%) reported that they had learned a lot or a fair bit. However, the breath of the information included in the short play meant that even the academics discovered things about orchards

“While I know a good deal at a rather academic level, I learnt a lot more about the cultural value of orchards”

The structure of the play helped to promote learning

“The five Acts and their headings gave me a better appreciation of the merits of orchards beside just being the vehicle for producing apples.”

According to an internal memorandum circulated throughout Natural England by Geoff Newman, Orchard and SSSI specialist with Natural England, the performance was

“the most direct way I have seen the natural environment used to help people’s health and wellbeing....This is singularly the most worthwhile event I have attended all year, superbly combining an increased awareness of the value of orchards as a habitat, and also demonstrating their value and benefits as a social asset.”

The multiple value of orchards came through most powerfully at Oxford. In the Hereford performance, the addition of a lot of content in the event relating to learning disabilities may have over-complicated the messages.

There is evidence that the learnings from the play have been taken on. For example, the Helping Britain Blossom project promotion included five fruit trees to represent an orchard. Also, the work of Ralph Austen has been reinvigorated. At the launch of the Folio Society’s Herefordshire Pomona in October 2014, James Crowden, who had been at the Oxford performance, recited from Austen.

For some, this has translated into thinking about how to capitalise this value

“Looking into the possibility of using orchards in Oxford/Oxfordshire as possible therapeutic/work or volunteer opportunities for the people we support.”

- **The wider community understand some of the social history of orcharding and cidermaking, especially the contributions of Ralph Austen and Fred Bulmer**

The play, with its introduction, includes a brief history of both Austen and Bulmer and encourages a comparison of their personal contributions to the cider industry.

At least half of the respondents reported that they had learned a lot or a fair bit about Ralph Austen (62%) and Fred Bulmer (49%) and encouragingly several said that they intended to read more about them, their appetites having been whetted by the event. For many, this was new knowledge. Indeed, 68% said that they knew nothing about Ralph Austen before the event and 68% said they only knew a little or nothing about Fred Bulmer.



The most significant change was in knowledge about Austen reported by the audience at Oxford. Only 17% said that they knew a fair bit about him beforehand, but two-thirds of those attending that performance said that they had learned a lot or a fair bit about him. For some, the play has rekindled an interest in Austen which will serve to promote the work more widely.

- **The work of the Bulmer Foundation is more widely known**

Everyone in the audience received a copy of the Bulmer Foundation's Annual Review. 21% of respondents had not heard about the Bulmer Foundation's work before the Orchard Art performances. Others said that they had heard about the Foundation's work on Orchard Art and wanted to experience the project first-hand.

- **ECHO and About Face Theatre Company report enhanced public profile**

Nearly half of respondents (47%) had not heard of ECHO before the Orchard Art performances.

According to the Chief Officer of ECHO, profile has increased but there is as yet no evidence that this has translated into advantage for the organisation or its participants in practice.

“We received some very good publicity through being involved in this project. We had hoped that it might have led to some good follow up contacts in Oxfordshire, but sadly this has not happened. However, in Hereford it was a wonderful opportunity to showcase our organisation and our work in front of some key people. Although it definitely raised our profile, it hasn’t had any obvious further benefit yet.”



The profile was raised further by the inclusion of one Act from the play in the launch event at Hereford Courtyard for the City of Culture bid. This resulted in a mention and photograph in the Hereford Times in October 2014.

- **New employment routes are identified for at least one actor**

61% of respondents at Lyde Court said that they had learned a lot or a fair bit more about opportunities for people with learning disabilities at the event. Most significantly, one of the actors has gained employment at TK Maxx in Hereford.

Her parents have said she gained the confidence to apply for this job because of the skills she has gained through being part of the About Face Theatre course.



Another actor has already been promoted to the professional About Face Theatre cast. One other actor has been paid to make a one-off film voice-over. It is of interest that not all parents saw employment as the ultimate goal – for one actor their family’s



objective was for them to be able to live independently and to be in a relationship. They did not see basic work as a beneficial outcome.

- **The benefits of partnership delivery across all sectors is illustrated**

There appears to have been recognition that the success of the Orchard Art play was the relationship between ECHO and the Bulmer Foundation, with the professionalism of About Face in the development and production of the play complemented by the management, organisation and arrangement of venues by the Bulmer Foundation

“I love collaboration and how the funding, the delivery, the performance was all a collaboration.”

“We must work together.”



According to the Chief Officer of ECHO,

“Everyone at About Face hugely enjoyed the opportunity this project gave them to get involved in something exciting and high profile. We could never have undertaken such a piece of work on our own. By working in partnership with the Bulmer Foundation we were able to achieve something really special which everyone will remember for a long time.

The performance at Lyde Court in particular will have given food for thought to Commissioners and adult social care staff, as it clearly illustrated what the third sector can achieve through imagination and partnership working. It also gave a fairly demoralised workforce a great boost. Someone commented how nice it was to go to something where all the messages were positive and no one mentioned tight budgets and lack of funding!

We would welcome any opportunity for further partnership working with the Bulmer Foundation.”

In Herefordshire, the event at Lyde Court was successful because the Director of Adult Wellbeing at Herefordshire Council required staff, including commissioners of service, to attend, thus opening their eyes to possibilities, with one saying that their highlight was

“seeing colleagues visibly moved and inspired”

The event served to demonstrate

“how rich potentially within Herefordshire broader well being and inclusion can be.”

## Overall

There have been so many expressions of appreciation of what was achieved in the process of bringing these performances to Oxford and Hereford, the correspondence has been summarised in Appendix 1. What is really clear is that these performances blew people away, far exceeded any expectations that they had, and therefore will be lasting memories which encapsulate what Orchard Art is all about – orchard value and the capabilities of people with learning disabilities especially to touch our hearts.



People were asked to relay some of their special moments and memories.

“The letter. Dancing under Tolkein's tree to a lovely version of the Proclaimers in the oldest herbarium in the UK with performers with learning disabilities who had, once again, just reduced me to tears - how many more unexpected elements can you put together in one experience?”

“The comedy of the actors-singing of the orchard songs in the Chapel and the interactive dancing at the end!”

“Insight into the personal experience of the benefits orchards can bring. It was great to see how the play allowed the actors to express their own personalities and show their skills without it being defined by ability.”

“As a parent I do appreciate the philanthropy of the Foundation and Orchard Art for giving our guys the opportunity to conceive, write, plan, stage and act in a production that has not only increased our knowledge (certainly mine!)

about the importance and social history of the Orchard, but has also shown us what great things can be achieved when a community comes together in appreciation of its environment and of the various talents living within it.”

“I am heartened, and thankful, that new opportunities for people with learning disabilities are still cropping up thanks to the efforts of enlightened people in the Bulmer Foundation.”

“I thought it was a wonderful cross section of society from high to low, making it a true national community event”

HM the Queen's Lord-Lieutenant for Oxfordshire congratulated the actors after the performance at Oxford.



He commented

"What an extraordinary treat this afternoon has been. Here we are standing in a stunningly beautiful garden on what is almost a laughable caricature of a perfect English summers day and we have been treated to...a quite outstanding demonstration of theatrical talent giving us very informative and extremely moving scenarios which will have been enormously stimulating to all of us."

In summary, the feedback is perhaps best encapsulated in two short comments received from members of the audiences;

“What an imaginative achievement”

“Anything is possible.”

## Unexpected outcomes

It is perhaps surprising how strongly people have reacted to the use of actors with learning disabilities and this is an area that warrants further understanding. This is not least because this could promote wider involvement of people with learning disabilities to put across messages to the wider community.

“It was humbling, engaging and inspiring”

“It brought us all to the same level, and showed me that all people should be valued and all people’s experiences should be valued”

“It made it more unusual, and more real in some ways. It was a brilliant practical human demonstration of the fun and diversity of orchards & art rather than a theoretical explanation”

“They made it special”

“It made it seem real”

“It made it more emotional”

“Their involvement was inspiring and enlightening”

The particularly strong emotional reaction from the audience to the reading by Evie of the letter from France is interesting. One explanation could be that, unusually, the actor read the letter in an emotion-free and measured way – although some have interpreted this as an emotional performance. Perhaps the nature of the delivery allowed others to place their own feelings about war and loss at this moment.



## Practical constraints to identifying outcomes

As with all questionnaires, the completion rate was not high (23%).

It was difficult in the focus group with actors to get good first-hand insight into how they felt about their involvement. As a result, reliance has been placed upon observations of their parents and carers.

## Monetising impact

Monetisation is used in this evaluation to calibrate some of the impacts and to help the consideration of what actually changed as a result of the theatre tour.

- People in the wider community see people with learning disabilities more positively

Based upon the survey results, 47% of the audiences learned a significant amount about learning disability from the performance. The total audience was 212 people. The outcome is assumed to be equivalent to attending a disability awareness training session.

$$212 * 47\% = 100 \text{ people} * £30 = £3,000$$

Assumption is £30 per head for half day training based upon an '*enhance the UK*' half day course.

Any subsequent change in sense of coherence or sense of community that might have led to improved well-being and change in behaviour has not been assessed in this evaluation.

- People with learning disabilities make a positive contribution to society

Although there were many other people with learning disabilities involved in development and delivery of the performances (with the creation of the hymn, the Orchard Art logo, and presentation of success stories at the Lyde Court event), or watched the performances, the focus of the evaluation is the impact on the nine student actors.

Two students have employment following their theatre course. It is assumed that the experience on the Orchard Art theatre tour was responsible for 40% of this and that the impact lasts for six months.

$$2 \text{ people} * £72.40 \text{ per week} * 26 \text{ weeks} * 40\% = £1,506$$

The proxy valuation of moving to paid employment is the avoidance of Job Seekers Allowance.

The actors and their families also reported a positive reaction to the performances and, through sense of coherence and sense of community, the assumption is that this will have translated into a small improvement in wellbeing and satisfaction manifested in social cohesion.

The assumption is that this will make the families more settled in Herefordshire which might translate into investing in improvements to their homes. The average spend on home improvements in the West Midlands is £572 (in 2014 Family Spending report by ONS). Assumption is that 10% of any such impact is the result of the Orchard Art theatre tour.

9 families \* £572 \* 10% = £515

- There is increased public understanding of the long term benefits of orchards to communities

This has not been valued. Although 55% of people in the audiences reported a significant increase in their knowledge of orchards, no evidence has been collected for this evaluation to assess whether this has translated into activities which could be valued, such as planting fruit trees or visiting orchards.

- People involved have a positive experience

In total there were 212 people in the audiences at the performances and there is strong evidence that they had a positive, enjoyable and memorable experience. A measure of the value of their experience might be the time that they spent watching the performances (average 3 hours).

212 \* 3 hours \* £10.45 per hour (median Herefordshire hourly earnings, 2013) = £6,646

## **Ideas for the future**

Few concrete proposals emerged from the performances. People have suggested more performances and performances for the general public, including of a film of the play.

In Oxfordshire discussions started about the therapeutic use of orchards both within the church and the caring organisations. Related to this, and perhaps in part driving that inquisition, it would be opportune to open a broad discussion about why orchards are special; their particular place in our culture and psyche, and how this differs between cultures, faiths, and over time.

In terms of the Orchard Art project, the role and aspirations of the parents, families and carers of people with learning disabilities has been exposed by the theatre tour and the views of the parents of the actors can inform new engagement with more families through this positive medium.



## **Data quality and areas for further research**

An important area for further research will be to understand the possibilities for engaging people with learning disabilities to put across complex messages to the general public. The need to distil delivery into accessible chunks of information has appeared to help the understanding of a general audience, combined with an emotional engagement with actors with learning disabilities that appears to derive from a deep rooted nurturing instinct. Whilst there is clear evidence that the wider public have been informed by the performances, and connected with the actors and the messages that they conveyed, this evaluation has not followed up with audiences later to find out whether their behaviour has changed tangibly, whether directly to the benefit of people with learning disabilities, to the preservation and use of orchards, or otherwise.

## **Key learnings**

People with learning disabilities can make exceptional contributions to society that are advantageous to all.

There is a reluctance of families of people with learning disabilities and caring organisations to integrate into wider society and the experience from the Orchard Art theatre tour suggests that parents of people with learning disabilities will have as much to gain from initiatives that provide positive interactions as the people with learning disabilities themselves.

Further research is required into the relationship between sense of coherence, sense of community and sense of place. In particular, the place of orchards as an important part of the landscape and natural life of Herefordshire, and as therapeutic environments, need to be further understood.

## **Conclusion**

The Orchard Art theatre tour was a success. It exceeded expectations, informed the wider public, and has opened new possibilities for people with learning disabilities integrated into society.

***“Any society must be judged on how it looks after it's weaker members, so the more we appreciate and support each other the stronger we become as a society. “***

## Appendices

### Appendix 1

#### Correspondence received following the performances

These excerpts have been de-personalised

#### Oxford

Brilliant event, which (we) were glad to be part of.

As far as I can see, and from what you said, Orchard Art does not have specific subscribers, but we should be happy to make a modest contribution if/when it does.

I hope all sorts of unpredicted but good outcomes emerge!

I didn't get chance to speak before leaving for my train. Brilliant day, great weather and great performance. Thanks for inviting me.

That was a really wonderful day - the Gods smiled upon us - and it was an occasion to remember - a daunting prospect for the performers - wonderfully executed - many congratulations to all!!

The most wonderful day in the most spectacular and sympathetic venue - how beautiful is that garden.

Thank you so much and congratulations - a lot of hard work!

Best regards and thanks from us both.

What an absolutely fantastic day. Thank you for everything you put into it and for including me. I was honoured to be a part of the service today. I think both you and Nick spoke so brilliantly, your passion is infectious and I think everyone present was just so pleased to be part of the crowd. As we went round the garden,, I could see it dawning on people how rare and special the event was. The "delight" temperature kept rising and the spontaneous group dance was a culminating burst of uncontainable JOY.

I hope the Bulmer Foundation achieved all its desired outcomes by the event and I very much look forward to coming along next week. I'm glad the girls were useful too, I'll bring them along next time as well. They enjoyed themselves very much and of course, their favourite bit was the dancing!

Congratulations! What an achievement, what a lovely afternoon and what a fulfilment of wishes. I am incredibly impressed with everyone's work and by that I do mean everyone - those who pushed wheelchairs, the man who did the sound, the unsung heros whose work is enormous but nobody knows! Everyone was wonderful and to bring it all from Herefordshire too - I do hope nobody got sun burnt or was dehydrated. I hope today goes as well too!

I got up super early to watch the thunder storm and mull over yesterday, it was a fantastic day, I am so lucky. The pictures are terrific, what a genuinely nice man the Lord-Lieutenant is. So many positive things, working with you has been a pleasure, the actors pulled out all the stops, the rest of the team, the weather, the garden even the bus driver! Thank you for

having the vision and making it happen. It was unlike any event with the main company, certainly the most high profile performance, and probably the top in terms of inclusion and respect.

Next week will be different....we will see.....

I was delighted it was suggested that I might like to join her at yesterday's celebration of orchards but didn't quite appreciate what I was going to be part of. I feel very privileged to have been there. It was truly amazing and inspirational. The About Face production was brilliant - and yes, I too had tears in my eyes. It was so engaging.

'Jesus Christ the Apple Tree' has long been my favourite song (often sung by the choir in Peterborough Cathedral at their Advent Carol Service) so what a treat to be able to sing along with everyone in Magdalen Chapel!

Thank you, and everyone involved, so much. There must have been a huge amount of work to get from 'an idea' to the wonderful day yesterday.

Just a note of thanks for your kind invitation to the Orchards event.

As you appreciated, everyone regarded the whole thing as a triumph, for which your role as inspirer and organizer was fundamental.

We had many fascinating conversations. Everyone we met was a meaningful link of some kind. I am left fielding many queries concerning the mid-seventeenth century, much of it in some way relating to cider and Herefordshire.

My long-standing enthusiasm for John Beale was confirmed and revived, reminding me to look at my files concerning his activities. Just as an indicator of his interest and link with the subject of your Museum, I am sending as an attachment and edited version of one of his first letters to Samuel Hartlib, where he includes the briefest of sketches of the writing, which was to become *Herefordshire Orchards*.

With renewed thanks, congratulations, and Very best wishes.

Thank you so very much to everyone who made the Celebration of the Value of Orchards possible. I will remember the occasion and the young performers for a very long time.

With all good wishes.

What a fabulous day - we really enjoyed it. Every event just gets better and better.

Another triumph - I am in awe of what you achieve!

We thoroughly enjoyed ourselves at your Orchard Art on Friday. Many thanks for all of your hard work putting this together!

Please see below for our participant's mum's response:

She had such a wonderful time on Friday she came to dinner last night with her carer and was so pleased to show us her programme and the photos.

It was a beautiful day and very memorable thank you for the opportunity to attend.

Much appreciation and very best wishes

Really delighted it went so well!!

Brilliant day- amazing, really inspiring

Great play, actors, locations and production event organisation (and food)!  
Thankyou so much to everyone

Thank you for an excellent event. A great service in the Chapel – including the singing lesson – though Nick is always quite brilliant at that sort of thing so wouldn't have expected anything less. The progress through the Orchards – notwithstanding the heat – was brilliantly executed and the play was educative, fun, and very moving. The opportunity to network with a range of people is most useful. All in all an inspiring and worthwhile afternoon – and well worth changing my rota-ed time at the Game Fair!! Thanks to all involved.

I met people from Oxfordshire I didn't know and I wondered whether you were planning to circulate a list of contact emails? Although I have an interest in Orchards I haven't really done anything about that interest other than support a few local things. I don't know for example whether there is a network of organisations in the country interested in Orchards and would like to try and find out. I am also inspired by Friday enough to wonder whether we couldn't in some way build on the event within Oxfordshire and if not exactly replicate it, but see if we cannot promote the idea of the spiritual and therapeutic value of orchards (care orchards along the care farm idea??) within the county.  
Anyway – once again many thanks indeed.

Wasn't it good! Completely knackered, but such a good day.

What a wonderful afternoon on Friday – thank you so much for inviting me. You'll be delighted to hear that you inspired me to become a Friend of the Botanic Gardens and I will aim to go frequently as a result! I've been missing out on so much!

I aim to plant two or four apple trees to espalier around my newly terraced front garden as part of the (innovative) East Oxford Orchard project which aims to plant trees around the community (rather than in one specific spot) and I will use the Botanic Gardens as inspiration for the rest of my borders!

I'm emailing on behalf of myself and the people who came with me to attend the Orchard Art Event on Friday. We all wanted to pass on our thanks to you for the opportunity to attend. We all found it moving, enjoyable and entertaining. It was a treat to be able to spend time in Magdalen College Chapel to observe the architecture, absorb the atmosphere, listen to the music and join in with the singing. The theatre production was wonderful and we were struck by the amount of work and commitment that must have gone into such a production. It was very impressive! The Botanic gardens are obviously beautiful and I don't know how you managed to arrange the weather...!

We are sorry that we left without introducing ourselves but we were all getting very hot and some of us were getting uncomfortable in the direct sunshine. The apple juice and sandwiches were delicious though and much enjoyed!

I left feeling that I had been part of something really unique and wonderful and I know that my colleagues and the people we supported to attend enjoyed it very much too.

I cannot convey just how inspirational and heart moving Orchard Art was.... Thank you so much for inviting us to attend..... the actors were absolutely amazing – I was astonished

how well they delivered and conveyed each act and the sense of meaning that orchards have... FANTASTIC – five stars!!!

I'll fill in the survey, but also wanted to say again how much I enjoyed the afternoon. It's an amazing thing that you're creating there. I'd love to know where the version of the Proclaimers song came from, and also the letter? Which reminds me – are you recording the performer's voices as well as amplifying them? If so, you should use her reading the letter on the website & elsewhere - it's quite an incredible voice & delivery that she has, and I'd love a copy of that to listen to again as well.

I am so pleased that the event went well - thank you so much for inviting us, we really did enjoy it, and the weather held beautifully.

It was...a pleasure to see the young people act...I loved the dancing and the piece of music at the end - what was it?

Thank you so much for organizing such a wonderful day in Oxford last Friday, we particularly enjoyed the service and the actors in the play were brilliant really showed so much enthusiasm, you could not have had a better day really. I told you that the sun shines on the righteous! We so enjoyed talking to the academics who could not have been kinder and was so helpful with information.

The future sees some real challenges for commissioners of services for adults with a learning disability. We need to enable people to live good quality ordinary lives in their communities with greater choice over how they live their life and the services they receive and at the same time do this with less money. It struck me that Orchard Art can achieve all of these things, it draws on the abilities and capacity of individuals and the community they live in and sustains people in that community. It also enables people to make choices about how they live their lives. The symbolism of the orchard as a place where people choose to spend time reflects this wider vision of achieving greater choice and control for people whilst maintaining dignity and well being. The performance communicated this in a very moving and accessible way to all abilities and all ages.

Thanks again for including me on Friday.

Thank you for a wonderful occasion!  
Hope today's event goes as brilliantly as Oxford's.

A great memory of a most special afternoon. It was a privilege to be part of it.  
Thank you for the energy and enthusiasm you are putting into Orchard Art. Keep me posted!

Many thanks. Yes it was a wonderful day and everyone enjoyed (it). The actors were excellent.

I have been meaning to thank-you for the splendid afternoon at Oxford. I enjoyed it very much and was so well cared for that it made a hot afternoon possible.

I found the play and the actors very moving and felt privileged to see it.  
With many thanks.

Thank you very much for inviting us to the orchard event. We both enjoyed ourselves tremendously. Your Orchard Art project is so inspiring and the participants looked like they were having a great time. I'm sure you will all go from strength to strength. Thank you again for a memorable day,

### **Lyde Court**

Thank you so much for today – what a showcase for people with learning disabilities & what a wonderful advocate.

Really enjoyed coming to the play at the Orchard Art event this afternoon. It was a really lovely occasion.

I just wanted to say a thank you for all of the effort and commitment you put into this afternoon – it was truly moving and gave some very powerful messages about the value of individuals, communities and our environment that could not have been delivered in such a way without this project.

I would like to try and build on the good work and energy that this has created – so lets think how that can happen.

Once again thank you

What another splendid day it has been! Thank you so much for the opportunity to work with Orchard Art and for the t-shirt, I just so enjoy it all.

I hope you have had a wonderful afternoon and evening, rehearsing all the success of both events. They wouldn't have happened without your big vision and I am just excited to watch the whole thing unfold.

What a day! Thank you for getting it all together.

Did you enjoy going to Lyde Court today for the performance 5 Fruit Trees make an Orchard? I can't believe it. I know, I know it was good, wasn't it. I was speechless last time but this is unbelievable. What, new season and everything? God, this is great. Next thing, Britain's Got Talent, I tell you. It's been a great, great afternoon. Congratulations to all of today's students and a big thanks to the audience for watching and finally a special thank you to the Bulmer's team in Hereford, they've been a delight. And to all the support team who make the show what it is a make my life that little bit easier. Well mostly, I don't know about today anyway. It's been fabulous but for now, the stage, the show and the year belong quite rightly to About Face Theatre Company. That really is it. Take care and have a great summer. Goodnight

Many thanks indeed for including me in the guest list for yesterday. It was yet another triumph for the project and proved to be an incredibly moving and inspirational day and, as always, informative. The players were so enthusiastic and involved, and brought smiles



and tears to all of us.

Looking forward to your future activities.

Another resounding success for the Bulmer Foundation! I hope you are pleased. I thought the 2 events were amazing and I'm sure everyone yesterday was just as impressed as the crowd in Oxford. Despite our reservations about turning it into a social care event, I think the celebration stories actually enhanced the event. It makes such a change these days to go to something which is entirely about good news. Thank you so much for organising the 2 events and for giving us the chance to be involved.

I just wanted to say a personal 'congratulations' for yesterday's event. It really was remarkable – thought-provoking and uplifting. My fellow commissioners are a lovely but hard-headed lot (comes from being massively over-stretched and stressed) who were previously worried that an afternoon out of the office would put extra stress on them. They all loved every minute of it, were massively entertained and moved and saw exactly the value of the day. We are all grateful for being given the opportunity to be there and to be part of a human orchard.

Thanks for a wonderful day we'll all remember for a long time (not just for Dave's dancing), and please pass on my congratulations to Jess and her fabulous actors.

What a triumph - everything seemed to go like clockwork (though I am sure you will have had the usual supply of behind the scenes happenings, but nothing appeared untoward to the audience). A masterpiece of admin and presentation. We both thoroughly enjoyed it. Thank you very much.

I wonder "whither Orchard Art" in the next year or two - doubtless we will hear!

It was fantastic. Well Done and thank you for inviting me. Lots of lasting memories!

Congrats for organising a great day yesterday and thanks for inviting me. It was really lovely... The performance was great and I especially liked the letter reading and the last scene.

What an afternoon! You must have been thrilled. Very moving and thought provoking. Thank you for letting me come and for including the Day Opps stuff as a new planting, much appreciated by all.

These emails are a wonderful testament to what was a great event. It was fun to be part of it all.

And a very big **well done** to all involved!

Now onto the next stage.....!

Thank you so much for the invite, it was a very interesting and inspiring day. Each of the celebrations were a fantastic expression of some of the work happening in Herefordshire, and we look forward to being a new planting, building new relationships with others in the county. On a personal level the drama group at the end of the day was my favourite, and were a joy to watch.

Thank you so much for a wonderful afternoon, it's not every day one is treated to such an event. It was perfect throughout, the venue & refreshments, the mix of people and of course all of the artists. I enjoyed every moment and learned so much about Orchards and Herefordshire.

Thanks so much for inviting me to come along. I am so glad I did, it was a truly wonderful event and I had the opportunity to meet and talk to some great people.  
You must be very proud of how it all went!

I so enjoyed the whole proceedings and the VIP's on my table had a lovely time, they were also visibly moved by the experience.

I look forward to hearing more about your future plans in the months to come

Inspiring afternoon on many levels.  
Well done.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Song - Shining Orchard after Rain**

*The tune is "England's Lane", the words of the verses were compiled by Helena Cavan and pupils at the three Herefordshire schools catering for children with learning disabilities, whilst the chorus is pure Ralph Austen. The five verses represent five fruit trees (an orchard!)*

Shining orchard after rain, row by row of glistening green,  
Golden treasury of life, bees and daisies, dandelions.

*Pleasure, admiration, hope,  
Profit, joy, the trees promote.*

Pear and plum and apple trees stand as children in the breeze,  
Toes in soil with arms outstretched, happy playground, freedom, rest.

*Pleasure, admiration, hope,  
Profit, joy, the trees promote.*

Orchards planted, new and old, gather sheep in shaded fold,  
Place of wonder, happiness, smiles blooming at their best.

*Pleasure, admiration, hope,  
Profit, joy, the trees promote.*

Fruit like marbles late in Spring, hanging mys'tries promising,  
Autumn fruit to bite and chew, crisp and sweet, refreshing brew.

*Pleasure, admiration, hope,  
Profit, joy, the trees promote.*

Trunks store wishes, secret things, clothed in skirts of nettle green,  
Fact, care, knowledge of the trees sparks compassion for their needs.

*Pleasure, admiration, hope,  
Profit, joy, the trees promote.*

### **Appendix 3**

#### **The cast**



**David Marshall**

**Associate of the Bulmer Foundation and project manager for Orchard Art**

"An orchard creates a safe and inspiring stage, rich in value and rooted in our culture"



**Evie Thomas**

**Actor and soloist**

"Orchards are nice and quiet; you can listen to the birds. I've enjoyed visiting and dancing in the local orchards. I think people should look after their local wildlife and orchards."



**Fred Bulmer**

**Cider maker and social reformer (1865-1941)**

"Without the possibility of fresh air and exercise we cannot expect to rear a healthy population."



**Helena Cavan**

**Poet and composer**

"I think orchards are the perfect *topias* to practice mindfulness."



**Jack Butler**

**Actor**

"Orchards are wonderful places that grow apples. I enjoyed walking in the orchard. I heard birds singing whilst practicing my script."



**Jade Millward**

**Actor**

"I enjoy acting and dancing and the Orchard Art project has allowed me to go to some lovely places. When I was at Hereford College of Arts we went to an orchard with the project and made an apple henge. I like orchards in springtime, especially the pretty pink blossom."



**Jess MacKenzie**

**Artistic Director at About Face Theatre Company**

"There is a magic that happens in an orchard, it frees the mind and spirit and inspires such creativity. I have seen dancing, singing and heartfelt theatre."



**Laura Walne**

**Actor and soloist**

"The worst thing about orchards is the sheep. I almost threw up after my picnic because of the horrible smell. Next time I have a picnic I will make sure there are no sheep."



**Matthew Jones**

**Actor**

"The ground is bumpy in orchards and it's difficult to use my wheelchair."



**Nick Haines**

**Actor**

"We looked around an orchard in the autumn. I threw an apple up in the air and it hit Sam smack on the forehead! He shouted and chased me. I was not very popular."



**Nick Read**

**Director of the Bulmer Foundation and Associate Agricultural Chaplain with Hereford Diocese**

"Virtually every day for two years I walked my dog through an orchard, it was never identical from one day to the next. Once the blossom forms the countryside is transformed."



**Ralph Austen**

**Orchard planter, writer, cider maker and religious radical (c1612-1676)**

"The world is a great library and fruit trees are some of the books wherein we may read and see plainly the attributes of God."





**Sam Evans**

**Actor**

"Orchards are for growing apples, one time an apple fell on my head which was a bad thing. I like eating apples."



**Tim Dowse**

**Actor**

"We rehearsed the show in an orchard. It was a very hot day and we danced in the car park."



**Tom Fleming**

**Actor**

"I remember being with friends in the orchard. I know that orchards are for growing apples that make cider. I like drinking cider."



**Zoe Bradley**

**Teaching Assistant at About Face Theatre Company**

"Happy childhood memories playing in orchards, dodging the bees, climbing trees, falling off and falling in nettles. Sadly they are now a housing estate called Henley Orchards."

## **Appendix 4**

### **The research context for the theory of change**

The research theories of personal sense of coherence and sense of community are central to the theory of change for the Orchard Art theatre tour.

Sense of coherence is expressed by Gropp et al (2007), cited in Barnard et al (2010) as a general orientation to one's environment that serves as a source of general resistance resources in order to deal with life demands, consisting of the three constructs of comprehensibility (structured and predictable), manageability and meaningfulness (worthwhile overcoming the challenges). Antonovsky saw meaningfulness as the most important component of sense of coherence, shaped by involvement in determining outcomes. Having had positive life experiences can increase sense of coherence (Antonovsky, 1996). The sense of coherence can be conceptualised as supporting a movement from *health dis-ease* to *health ease* (Mittelmark and Bull, 2013) and is correlated with quality of life (Eriksson and Lindstrom, 2007). Sense of coherence is correlated with financial health as demonstrated by financial planning and manageable debt (Barnard et al, 2010). Ngai and Ngu (2012) found that family sense of coherence, helped by social support and higher financial income, plays a significant role in promoting quality of life and reducing depressive symptoms in pregnant mothers. Family sense of coherence is identified as a strong factor influencing individual sense of coherence, with Antonovsky suggesting that in the face of collective stressors, the strength of the collective sense of coherence is often decisive in stress management. This was found by Lustig and Akey (1999) for positive family adaptation for families with children with learning disabilities. Oelofsen and Richardson (2006) found high levels of stress, poorer health and weaker sense of coherence than a similar cohort of parents of children without learning disabilities. This suggests that parents of children with learning disabilities are more likely to be vulnerable and unable to cope effectively with stressful life events in general. In making decisions about careers, people with learning disabilities who show a high sense of coherence tend to have lower dysfunctional career thoughts and therefore are able to make career decisions (Lustig and Strauser, 2008).

Antonovsky pointed to society's responsibility to improve the individual's sense of coherence. The key is embedded in society and people who care about each other (Eriksson and Lindstrom, 2007). Connection cultures could have a role here. Stallard and Pankau (2007) describe this as fostering a sense of community such that, in corporate terms, a competitive advantage is achieved. This is created by inspiring identity, understanding and helping achieve the potential of all human value, and knowledge flow to share information.

Attitudes towards people with learning disabilities can be influenced by training and leadership (Futcher 2010) and families can often hold less liberal views (on sexuality of patients with learning disabilities). Those in frequent contact with people with learning disability have a more positive attitude towards them than those who rarely meet them (Gillberg and Soderstrom, 2003) and awareness training is significantly associated with a more favourable attitude to people with learning disabilities (Bailey et al, 2001).

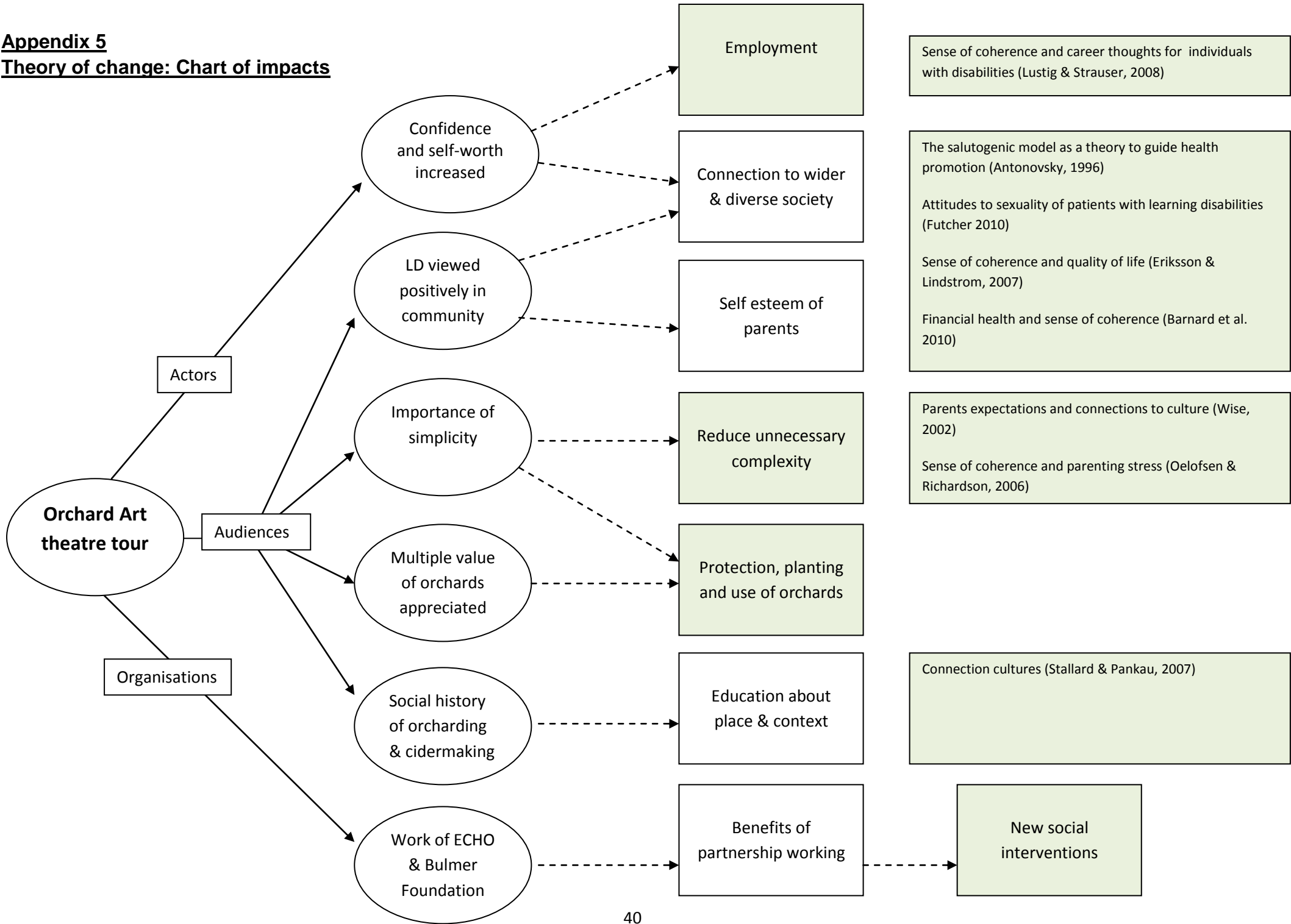
Sense of coherence and sense of community are related, as found by Braun-Lewensohn et al (2013) with people removed from place in traumatic situations. Sense of community refers

to the bonding, mutual concerns and shared values that enable an individual to be part of a community. Sense of community also potentially describes an emotional attachment to place, where place can create individual self-definition. Research indicates that sense of community is more difficult to recreate than the personal resource of sense of coherence.

Whilst the evaluation approach did not incorporate direct structured measurement of change in sense of coherence and sense of community, there is evidence of positive attitude change in the responses to the questionnaires.

Research references are set out in Appendix 6.

**Appendix 5**  
**Theory of change: Chart of impacts**



## **Appendix 6**

### **Research References**

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